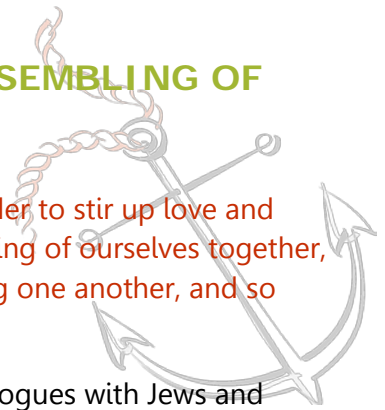




"NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:24, 25).



IN studying the life of Christ, we can see that He often met in synagogues with Jews and taught the people. It is *His wisdom* that Christians were also to regularly meet together. The Hebrew converts who originally read this letter were being persecuted by their fellow Jews and were shrinking backwards. They were tempted to revert back to a law which was designed to bring people to Christ (Gal. 3:24). Most Christians who stray from the regular worship assemblies today do not do so because of persecution, but rather because of pride (having their feelings hurt) and worldliness (the attachment to a sin over Christ). Denying this loving admonition, we only add sin onto sin (Heb. 10:26). But *why* is it so important to attend these meetings?

- **One, to obey the commandments of God.** One cannot be saved without obedience. Jesus only saves the obedient (Heb. 5:9). Yet, God usually commands things which are good for us.
- **Two, time to meet with the Lord.** The "assembling of ourselves together" is where the Lord joins us and where we can commune with Him. We specifically enjoin fellowship with Him by obeying and partaking of His word. The principle of Matthew 18:20 applies: "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." We should find it a comfort to know that the Son's presence is with us. Yet, His presence is not with those who willfully dismiss such meeting times.
- **Three, we are led in the path of life.** "You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Ps. 16:11). Not only is it joyful to be in His presence when we assemble, but we are shown the path of life through His word. One reason to attend all the gatherings of the saints is to be *shown the path of life*. Yet those who willfully forsake such meetings are not walking on that path. How much do you value life? Your attendance answers the question.
- **Fourth, it promotes edification of the members.** It demonstrates a *loving* consideration of one another and the promotion of good works (Heb. 10:24). It is this love, which is displayed and promoted, that teaches outsiders that we are disciples of Christ (Jn. 13:34, 35). However, *the one who chooses to abandon and dismiss these services is quickly growing cold*, even as an ember quickly burns out when separated from the heap of coals.
- **Fifth, it prepares us for the Day of Judgment.** The "Day" that was approaching in Hebrews 10:25 was the Day of Judgment (see Heb. 10:27ff). The Day of Judgment on Jerusalem may be a similar shadow of such. However, for all Christians, it is the Day of Judgment by which everyone will stand and give account for the things which he did in his body that is staring at all of us as we walk toward eternity (2 Cor. 5:10). "Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end" (Ps. 73:17).



—Steven J. Wallace